

# Decision Making

Once "The" Problem  
has been identified...  
How do you "Decide"  
on the best  
"Solution"?



KC Federal Executive Board  
Federal Emerging Leader Development Course

# *DECIDE Decision-Making Model*

## *✓ Define the Problem*

What is The Problem, Why should anything be done at all, What should or could be happening?

## *Establish the Criteria*

What do you want to achieve in the decision? What do you want to preserve? What do you want to avoid?

## *Consider all the Alternatives*

What are the possible choices that meet the criteria? Consider all the factors that affect the alternatives

## *Identify the best Alternative*

Selection of the best alternative is based on the experience, intuition, and experimentation.

## *Develop and Implement a Plan*

How is the plan going to be implemented. What are the resources used in the actual process

## *Evaluate and Monitor the Solution*

Troubleshoot your decision. What could go wrong. What could be done differently?

Feedback

## *DECIDE Decision-Making Model*

*D* – Define the Problem



*Gather Information*

*E* – Establish Criteria

*C* – Consider Alternatives

Generate Possible Solutions

*I* – Identify the Best Alternative

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*E* – Evaluate the Outcome

# *Gather Information*

## Facts, Assumptions, and Interests

***Fact:*** *a thing that is known to be true, it can be proved*

- Restrict your claims to those supported by the data you have.
- Search for information that opposes your position as well as information that supports it.
- Make sure that all information used is clear, accurate, and relevant to the question at issue.
- Make sure you have gathered sufficient information.

***Avoid confusing assumptions as facts.***

***Challenge “facts”: not all facts are created equal***

# *Gather Information*

Facts, Assumptions, and Interests

***Assumption:** a belief or feeling that something is true or that something will happen, although there is no proof*

- All reasoning is based on Assumptions.
- Clearly identify your assumptions and determine whether they are justifiable.
- Consider how your assumptions are shaping your point of view

*Trace the implications and consequences that follow from your reasoning.  
Search for negative as well as positive implications.  
Consider all possible consequences.*

# *Gather Information*

Facts, Assumptions, and Interests

***Interests***: a connection with something that affects your attitude to it, especially because you may benefit from it in some way

Egocentric thinking results from the unfortunate fact that humans do not naturally consider the rights and needs of others. We do not naturally appreciate the point of view of others nor the limitations in our own point of view. We do not naturally recognize our egocentric assumptions, the egocentric way we use information, the egocentric way we interpret data, the source of our egocentric concepts and ideas, the implications of our egocentric thought. We do not naturally recognize our self-serving



## *Intellectual Humility*      *vs*      *Intellectual Arrogance*

Having a consciousness of the limits of one's knowledge, including a sensitivity to circumstances in which one's native egocentrism is likely to function self-deceptively; sensitivity to bias, prejudice and limitations of one's viewpoint.

Intellectual humility depends on recognizing that one should not claim more than one actually knows. It does not imply spinelessness or submissiveness. It implies the lack of intellectual pretentiousness, boastfulness, or conceit, combined with insight into the logical foundations, or lack of such foundations, of one's beliefs.

*Be Openminded*

*Intellectual Perseverance*

*vs*

*Intellectual Laziness*

Be conscious of the need to use intellectual insights and truths . . .

. . . in spite of difficulties, obstacles, and frustrations; firm adherence to rational principles despite the irrational opposition of others; a sense of the need to struggle with confusion and unsettled questions over an extended period of time . . .

. . . to achieve deeper understanding or insight.

*Separate the Intellectual struggle from the Emotion*

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# *Criteria*

## *Selection / Screening:*

All Alternatives, Courses of Action, Proposed Solutions **must** meet every criteria to be considered a viable solution.

*Feasible*: Fits within available constraints and restraints

*Acceptable*: Worth the cost or risk

*Suitable*: Solves the Problem Legally and Ethically (preserves  
Organizational Values)

*Distinguishable*: Differs significantly from other solutions

*Complete*: Solves the critical aspects of the problem

*What do you want to achieve in the decision?*

*What do you want to preserve?*

*What do you want to avoid?*

# *Criteria*

## *Evaluation:*

These are the measures of the solution. They differentiate how good a solution is when compared against a base standard.

Clarity  
Accuracy  
Precision  
Relevance  
Significance  
Depth  
Breadth  
Logic  
Fairness

Credibility  
Bias  
Currency  
Intended Audience  
Usability

Sunk Cost  
Time  
Maintenance Cost  
Mileage  
Return on Investment  
Practicality  
Long Term Growth /  
Development

*Every solution will work. Which one is the best?*

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# *Generate Possible Solutions*

## *Brainstorming*

Is an unconstrained group process designed to generate new ideas and concepts.

## *1-2-4-Whole Group*

This process is a good way to get a rich conversation and more ideas by using small groups. It involves the principle of pre-commitment, critical thinking, and the clear expression of thought.

## *Outside-In Thinking*

Used to identify the full range of basic forces, factors, and trends that would indirectly shape an issue.

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# Analyze Possible Solutions

- *S-W-O-T*  
*(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)*
- *Premortem Analysis*
- *Key Questions*

Some Examples

- *Concise business problem and desired end state, with cost and performance improvements.*
- *Documented laws, regulations and policies.*
- *Validated capabilities and capability performance measures.*
- *Affordable capability with compelling business case for committing organizational resources for work planned up to next decision point.*

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# *Identify the Best Alternative*

*Selecting the "Best" Solution of those developed*

*Requires Comparing and Contrasting possible Solutions against the Evaluation Criteria that you developed previously.*

*Be cautious of comparing possible Solutions directly against one another. This often leads to a subjective decision rather than a more objective decision.*

# Decision Matrix

DECMAT

COA / Eval Criteria	Cost	Reliability	Aesthetic	TOTAL
Ford #1	2	3	1	6
Dodge #2	1	1	3	5
Chevrolet #3	2	2	1	5

“Highest is Best”

# Decision Matrix

DECMAT

COA / Eval Criteria		Cost	Reliability	Aesthetic	TOTAL
Ford #1	2	3	$2 \times 1 = 2$	7	
Dodge #2	1	1	$2 \times 3 = 6$	8	
Chevrolet #3	2	2	$2 \times 1 = 2$	6	
			x2		

CRITERIA WEIGHTS

“Highest is Best”

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# *Develop and Implement a Plan*

How is the plan going to be implemented. What are the resources used in the actual process

Up until this point the **SOLUTIONS** have been **CONCEPTS**. When we apply resources to a concept it becomes a **PLAN**. Decisions to approve a concept are often followed up with decisions about approving a **PLAN** for implementation.



Planning is a topic for another time!



# QUESTIONS